9. Development of Root & Tuber Crops.
10. Promotion of bee keeping for increasing production and productivity of the horticulture crops.
11. Development of Medicinal & Afomatic Plants.
12. Development of Mushroom Cultivation.
13. Integrated Development Programme for Spices.

Farm Subsidies

2657. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government in its National Agenda for Governance propose to continue with farm subsidies;

(b) if so, the rational behind this;

(c) details of steps taken to make farm subsidies more direct, efficient and specific; and

(d) reduction in food subsidy on account of hike in issue prices of Sugar, Wheat and Rice supplied through PDS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The National Agenda for Governance stipulates commitment of the Government to continue with farm subsidies and make them more direct, efficient and specific. The rationale behind continuance of the subsidies is to provide inputs to the farmers at affordable prices to adopt modern technology for increasing production and productivity.

(c) Major agricultural input subsidies given to farmers are fertilisers, irrigation and power. Subsidies on irrigation and power are given directly by the State Governments charging lower rates than that of actual cost. However, subsidies on fertilisers are routed through manufacturers/suppliers of fertilisers.

(d) Raising of issue prices from January, 1999 for above Poverty Line households would reduce the subsidy burden to the extent of about Rs. 2600 crores.

Changes in Agricultural Research System

2658. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring changes in the agricultural research system to make it more accountable to the nation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for the poor response of the agriculture research system/work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The government propose to bring changes in the agricultural research system to make it more accountable to the nation.

(b) The agricultural research system has well established Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) system in place for all its research institutions. However, to enhance the accountability, it is planned to introduce Project Based Budgeting (PBB) system. In the project based budgeting system, the research project becomes the costing centre instead of the institution.

(c) There is no poor response of agricultural research system/works. The technologies generated by national agricultural research system have been widely adopted by the farmers. The contribution of R & D efforts have been cornerstone of growth of agricultural sector. The technology led growth has helped India to quadruple its foodgrain production during last 50 years. Simultaneously, today India is a leading producer of fruits, vegetables, milk, eggs and fish. These achievements have been possible with the efforts of agricultural research system/works.